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Viewing cable 04BRUSSELS2502, EU ROLLS OUT STRATEGY FOR PROGRESSIVE ENGAGEMENT

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
04BRUSSELS2502	2004-06-10 14:22	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Brussels

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/wikileaks-leaked-letter-raises-questions-over-us-iso-nooping-on-friendly-powers-16005998.html>

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 002502

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/ERA, NEA/NGA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/10/2009

TAGS: [PREL](#), [EAID](#), [IZ](#), [EUN](#), [USEU](#), [BRUSSELS](#)

SUBJECT: EU ROLLS OUT STRATEGY FOR PROGRESSIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH IRAQ

REF: A. A. THE HAGUE-EUR/USEU FAX 6/10/2004

[1](#)B. B. USEU 0239

Classified By: USEU POLOFF LEE LITZENBERGER; REASONS 1.5 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. EC Commissioner Patten, with the full support of EU HighRep Solana, has proposed an ambitious strategy for rapidly ramping up EU relations with Iraq following the transition to sovereignty. In a private letter that complements the public strategy, Patten and Solana call on the EU to send election observers, help draft a constitution, train police, work with Iraq's neighbors to promote regional stability, and consider co-hosting an international conference on Iraq. The strategy, boosted by the creation of the Interim Iraqi Government, UNSCR 1546 and the G-8 summit, will be considered by EU Foreign Ministers in Brussels on June 14. The strategy is forward-leaning and pushes the envelope of what EU ministers will be able to support. End Summary.

EU Releases Strategy for FM's to consider

[1](#)2. (C) On June 9, the European Commission released a three-phase medium term strategy for progressive engagement with Iraq before, during and after elections. In a joint cover letter transmitting the strategy to EU Council President Irish FM Cowen, Commissioner Chris Patten and EU High Rep Javier Solana elaborate an ambitious program to build close EU-Iraq ties. The cover letter, obtained by embassy The Hague (ref A), has not been made public. The letter and strategy will be considered for endorsement by EU

Foreign Ministers, who meet June 14-15 in Brussels.

EC Strategy: Three phases

13. (SBU) The EC proposal, available online at [http://europa.eu.int/com/external relations/iraq/news](http://europa.eu.int/com/external%20relations/iraq/news), calls for engaging Iraq in three distinct phases: pre-election, post-election and medium term. Apart from being keyed to the elections, the phases do not have specific time limits. This is primarily due to uncertainties related to the security situation that may affect timing of the phases.

--Pre-election: Election support (through civil society development, rule of law programs, and voter education); a Troika visit (possibly in the fall, in Baghdad, Amman or Brussels); launching a regional dialogue with Iraq's neighbors; and disbursement of 305 million euro reconstruction/humanitarian assistance package approved last fall.

-- Post-election: Launch formal political dialogue with provisional government, issue EU/Iraq Joint Declaration, and disburse CY 2005 reconstruction assistance (requested 200 million euros). The 2005 assistance request will be debated in the European Parliament this fall.

-- Medium Term: Begin negotiation of a Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA); support creation of a "framework" to enhance regional security; offer European Investment Bank lending.

Solana-Patten Letter Lays Out Ambitious Agenda

14. (C) The Solana-Patten letter elaborates on each of these phases, and lays out an ambitious agenda of comprehensive political engagement with Iraq's interim and provisional governments. For example, the letter suggests a possible EU election observer mission, help in drafting a constitution, and police training as ways to support free elections. It also suggests sending an exploratory mission to Iraq to identify other areas where EU assistance would be appropriate.

Regional Security and an International Conference

15. (C) The Solana-Patten letter also highlights the opportunity for the EU to promote security and stability in the region by sponsoring regional confidence-building measures. As a first step, it calls on consulting countries in the region bilaterally; ultimately, the letter states, "some form of ad hoc group might be required to support efforts by the region." The letter notes that the idea of a regional conference to include Iraq's neighbors has been raised, and says the EU, "in agreement with the Iraqi Interim Government, should support and consider co-sponsoring such a conference."

Deepening Engagement

16. (C) The Solana-Patten letter also calls for increased visits and exchanges to "lay the foundation for longer-term relations." Addressing the issue of EU representation on the ground -- as the security situation permits -- the letter calls on those member states with diplomatic missions in Iraq "to foster... a collective EU approach..." The Commission plans to open an office in Amman by July 1; this should move to Baghdad "when conditions permit" and the EU should consider appointing a Special Representative to Iraq. Negotiating a Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) with Baghdad will cap the process by institutionalizing EU ties with Iraq.

Budget Notes

17. (C) Although the strategy is not a budget document, the outlines of EU assistance beyond 2004 is emerging. The Commission has requested 200 million euros for reconstruction for 2005 (matching the pledge made at Madrid for 2004). The European Parliament should debate and vote on this request in the fall; the security situation at that time (and the extent to which it has delayed disbursement of the 2004 package) will be key considerations. Early in 2005, the Commission will prepare a proposal for 2006; Patten has hinted that it is likely to also be for 200 million euros. A commission official has told us the EC will be looking at the expected growth in Iraq's oil revenues by then when formulating the 2006 request.

Comment

18. (C) The EU strategy for Iraq is a political declaration of intent to progressively deepen EU engagement with Iraq. It reflects the personal conviction of Patten and Solana that the EU can't stay on the sidelines; a stable, democratic Iraq is essential to European security. Given the EU's past divisions over the Iraq intervention, it is an ambitious and far-reaching proposal that the U.S. should welcome.